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Victorian engineering construction work at highest levels ever

The total value of Victorian engineering construction work done during June quarter 2004 was the highest on record (\$1,365.3 million), according to figures released today by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

Of this figure, the largest increases were recorded in telecommunication construction (up 33% from the previous quarter), bridges, railway and harbour construction (up 10%) and road, highway and subdivision construction (up 10%).

Other economic, social and environmental highlights in **State and Regional Indicators, Victoria** include:

- The number of people unemployed long-term (52 weeks and over) rose 178% in non-metropolitan Victoria, but fell 27% in Melbourne over the twelve months to August 2004.
- The population in non-metropolitan Victoria is ageing faster than the Melbourne population. By 2046, the proportion of people aged 65 and over is expected to reach 32% in non-metropolitan Victoria compared to 25% in Melbourne.
- In 2002, Victoria recorded the highest proportion of Indigenous people (28%) reporting their health as 'fair' or 'poor', of all states and territories.
- Victoria's fertility rate has been below the national level since 1970. In 2002, Victoria's fertility rate was 1.68 compared with 1.75 nationally.
- The majority (99%) of Victorian households recycled waste and 81% re-used water in March 2003.
- Private vehicles were the main form of transport to work or study for over three-quarters (75%) of all Victorians in 2001.

This issue also contains feature articles on the status of Victorian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, and the ageing of Victoria's population.

More details, including information on regional Victoria, tourism, labour force, price index statistics, trade, crime and the environment are in **State and Regional Indicators, Victoria, September Quarter 2004** (cat. no. 1367.2).

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